

FROM THE ARMY ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE

Seizing The Opportunity

The Army is undertaking one of the most ambitious transformations in its history. The challenges are formidable, but the timing is right. We live in a time of relative peace. Our Nation's economic strength has given us a period of prosperity. A decade of post-Cold War experience has provided us a strategic perspective, and American technological power gives us tremendous potential.

This edition of *Army AL&T* features several articles that highlight the acquisition, logistics, and technology community's many contributions toward building the future force. We are teaming with our Army counterparts to accomplish three goals simultaneously—extending the life of our legacy force systems through recapitalization and selective upgrades; fielding the interim force to fill the gap between our heavy and light forces; and maximizing advances in technology and organizational adaptations to revolutionize land-power capabilities for the force of the future, the objective force.

The Army has a plan to selectively upgrade and recapitalize legacy force equipment to combat the rapid aging of our weapon systems. We preserve readiness best and most cost-effectively when we retire or replace warfighting systems on a 20-year modernization cycle. As systems age, they break down with greater frequency and become more costly and difficult to maintain in peak warfighting condition. Today, 75 percent of major combat systems exceed engineered design half-life and will exceed design life by 2010. Operation and sustainment costs are up more than 30 percent, and aircraft safety-of-flight messages are up 200 percent since 1995. To combat these spiraling costs, the Army has identified 19 proven systems that will benefit from upgrades and enhancements. We must also selectively modernize those capabilities with systems like the Crusader howitzer and Comanche helicopter to cost-effectively maximize the capabilities of the legacy force and satisfy objective force requirements.

The fielding of the interim force fills the strategic gap between our heavy and light forces and is an essential step toward the objective force. The key component of the interim force is the Interim Brigade Combat Team (IBCT). The first two IBCTs are being organized at Fort Lewis, WA. In addition, Army Secretary Thomas E. White has announced the locations of our next four IBCTs at Forts Richardson and Wainwright in Alaska; Schofield Barracks, HI; and in the 28th Infantry Division (Mechanized) of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. The equipment foundation of the IBCTs will be a family of Interim Armored Vehicles (IAVs) that will be capable of being transported by C-130-type aircraft. The IAVs will have enhanced characteristics for greater effectiveness in a variety of operational missions around the globe.

The Army's ultimate goal for transformation is the objective force. Operating as part of a joint, combined, and/or interagency team, it will be capable of conducting rapid and decisive offensive, defensive, stability and support operations, and be able to transition among any of these missions without a loss of momentum. It will be lethal and survivable for warfighting and force protection and responsive and deployable for rapid mission tailoring and for the projection



required for crisis response. In addition, the objective force will be versatile and agile for success across the full spectrum of operations and sustainable for extended regional engagement and sustained land combat. The objective force will provide for conventional overmatch and a greater degree of strategic responsiveness, mission versatility, and operational and tactical agility.

The Future Combat Systems (FCS), a "system-of-systems," is one of the essential components for the objective force. To accelerate development of key technologies, the Army partnered with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency in a collaborative effort. During the next 6 years, the Army will demonstrate and validate FCS concepts and exploit high-payoff enabling technologies including composite armor, active protection systems, multirole (direct and indirect fire) cannons, compact kinetic energy missiles, hybrid electric propulsion, human engineering, and advanced electro-optic and infrared sensors.

Equally essential to the objective force is the fielding of the Comanche helicopter beginning in 2006. Comanche is the central program of Army aviation and a prime example of existing modernization programs with significant value for objective force capability. Although Comanche will be fielded as part of the objective force, its digitization will be compatible with legacy force and interim force systems.

The Army Battle Command System (ABCS) is currently envisioned as the internetted network that will enable the command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) capabilities of the objective force. ABCS is the Army's component of the Global Command and Control System and is a complex system-of-systems that provides the mechanism to receive and transmit information among the joint forces. This capability will significantly advance the ability to expand situational awareness of the battlefield to every echelon of the force, thus dramatically improving the ability to increase the speed and effectiveness of tactical decisions.

The Army, in a relatively short period of time, has made great progress with its transformation. Tough decisions have been made to reprioritize resources in support of our new priorities. The Army has taken aggressive steps to accelerate essential science and technology efforts to identify revolutionary new technologies. Two brigades are being organized at Fort Lewis as a foundation for the new IBCTs, and four new ones have been identified. The Army awarded a contract for a family of IAVs to equip these units and provide invaluable new warfighting capabilities. Finally, and very important, the Army has made the needed decisions to maintain and extend the combat superiority and readiness of the current force until the future force is completely fielded. While there is much work to be done, the momentum is already irreversible.

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